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Primitive Christianity is rooted in Jewish soil. Without some knowledge of that soil it cannot be historically understood, either in its kinship to, or difference from, the religion from which it sprang.

The plan of the work is very comprehensive. It includes a treatment of the sources, the development of Jewish piety, the national character of the Jewish religion, the theology of Judaism, and such collateral movements as the philosophy of Philo and the cult of the Essenes.

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#### THE VINDICATION OF CHRISTIANITY.

THIS essay<sup>1</sup> is described by its author as an attempt "to enter completely into the modern view of the world and show that Christian truth remains;" "for Protestant Christianity cannot consent to become the religion of the ignorant and the thought-weary." The course of Professor Knox's argument is as follows:

The "direct and fundamental proofs" of the Christian religion change with changing views of the world. A classic line of argument is formed when a common world-view has for some continuous period of time held the field, and when Christian thought has definitely adjusted itself to it. Defendants and opponents of Christianity at such a time alike avail themselves of common intellectual instruments, and the issue of the contest is decided by the applicability of the instruments to the situation and by the skill with which they are handled. Such an argument was formulated by Bishop Butler in his *Analogy*, and such a situation was common to orthodox and heterodox in the great Deistic controversy of the seventeenth century. Miracles, the ontological, cosmological, teleological arguments for the existence of God, design, natural *versus* revealed knowledge, etc., constituted the problems of the classic argument. All this has been changed by the development and promulgation of modern thought. Miracles as infringements of natural laws are scientific inconceivabilities: as phenomena obeying peculiar natural laws, they have no apologetic value. Kant dealt the three classic arguments for the existence of God crushing blows. That from design has been relegated to the limbo prepared for antiquated notions. Common consent has been overthrown as a question of fact, and it is seen to be worthless even if it were true. Truth

<sup>1</sup> *The Direct and Fundamental Proofs of the Christian Religion.* By GEORGE WILLIAM KNOX. New York: Scribner, 1903. 197 pages. \$1.20.

is no longer determined by the numbers who hold a given opinion, but by the character of the opinion itself. Causation cannot lead us from the world to a first cause, for it is now seen that causation has but a relative value as delimiting in a practical way and for certain purposes some portion or portions of the all-inclusive web of activities which constitutes the ground of phenomena and exhibits the active, ever-present, immanent reality. A geocentric conception of our system has given place to a heliocentric. And beyond our system are other systems and other suns. "What is man, therefore," the modern scientist asks, "that he should be considered as the end and aim for the existence and course of the universe?" Space and time lead out and out and back and back, indefinitely, until man and his concerns appear quite as incidental to the universe as the soon-burst though brilliant bubble upon the ocean wave. Abandoning all *a priori* attempts at constructing the character, course, or meaning of the universe, the scientist takes the world as he finds it, struggling ceaselessly to lay bare its facts, to understand its laws, collecting, classifying, testing, until he finds the reality of things. What he *might wish* to be so is nothing to him; what *is* so is everything. Thus, assured of what he finds and intelligently ignorant of what is beyond him, he toilsomely builds up his conceptions, knowing full well that they are partial and certain to be included in larger views, but knowing also that they are well founded. Such, then, being the atmosphere by which we are surrounded, the question comes home: Can our religious, and especially our Christian, beliefs live in such an atmosphere? And if so, how?

It is plain that if religion is to make good its claim, it can do so only by becoming itself scientific. Science has come to stay. Its methods are definite, and its results are known. Harmonies between authority, religion, and science are out of date. The days of two-fold truth are no longer with us, and science is in possession of the field. Submitting our religious beliefs to its tests, two questions arise immediately: first, What is the nature of scientific method, and how does it get reality? second, What results do we obtain by the application of scientific method to religion?

Taking the first question, we find that science begins with matters of experience which engage our attention and challenge our insight. These matters of experience science examines, not simply in the present instance, but in as many instances as it can find. By careful examination it endeavors to obtain an accurate description of the experiences

in their various forms, and to bring to light the principle which governs them. When the scientist is assured that his observation is exhaustive (for his purpose) and his explanation by principle complete, he makes a test by way of putting the principle in operation and observing whether the precise experience or set of experiences demanded put in their appearance. If his experiment be not successful, he retraces his work, observing, comparing, constructing, trying one combination after another, until he obtains the desired result, viz., the ability *to produce* the set of experiences which he wishes to explain. When he is able to do so, he believes that he understands his fact and has obtained reality. One thing more remains, the result of scientific investigation is expressive of a form and order of experience which the scientist construes, but does not create. The reality is a definite something, into whose inner nature he can enter, but whose nature, although intelligible to him, is not his creation nor is subject to his mere wish or whim. In short, the reality, while definite and intelligible, is not a private experience, but something essentially public. For this reason the scientist publishes his results and appeals confidently to the judgment of his fellows. When they, repeating his experiment, are able to obtain experiences identical with his, the result is held to be entirely objective, and the reality, in so far, known.

Before passing to the second question, there is a further point pertinent to truth and reality, and significant for religion, which must be made plain. Facts appear to be of two orders. There are natural facts, or those with whose initial fabrication human experience has had nothing to do. They are real *data*. There are other facts, such as are contained in the processes of racial activity and expressed most completely in the actualities of civilization, which are not *data*, but *constructs* of human experience. The test of their truth or falsity therefore must consist in the question whether they serve efficiently the purposes which called them into being, and whether these purposes are in harmony with the complexities and tendencies of human life, as we know it. To this order of facts religion belongs, viz., to the order of phenomena which not simply *are*, but which involve the further question as to whether they *ought* or *ought not to be*.

Reverting to the main argument, we meet our second question: What result do we obtain by the application of scientific method to religion? The answer is furnished by the science of comparative religion. This discipline has established that man is religious by nature, and that religion has undergone a remarkable development in

the race. This development has brought out into clear light the object and function of religion. The object is God, conceived "as a super-sensible reality, recognized as real, as worshipful, as good, and as responding to us." The function is to supply an ideal for man, considered both in his social and in his individual capacity—an ideal which, however limited it may be in its earlier stages, emerges finally as a principle applicable to all mankind. This formulation enables us to adjudge the merits of those religions which have claimed universality, and finally to raise the question whether the religion adjudged to be the premier really fulfils the purpose set it.

This rank of primacy is adjudged by Professor Knox to Christianity, for reasons which are definite and well stated, but into which, for purposes of review, it is not necessary to go. What, then, is Christianity, and how does it stand the test of truth and falsity? As an experience, the Christian life is single, but must be regarded from two points of view. As a principle of social organization, it is an ethics; as an intuition of ultimate super-sensible reality, it is religion. Religion, operative as an ideal of conduct for men among men, is ethics, whereas ethics, conceived in terms of its ground and ultimate source, is religion. For this reason we must consider together and inseparably Christianity's ultimate conceptions—the brotherhood of men and the fatherhood of God. Man's experience of God as a Father is the basis and ground for his treatment of his fellow-men, without distinction of nation, color, sex, or rank, as brothers. His practical interaction with his fellow-men as brethren, and his sincere desire to realize this ideal among men, is the guarantee of the sincerity of his belief in a heavenly Father. We are now in a position to raise the questions: Is Christianity true? Is it scientifically demonstrable? As has been seen, the truth of every scientific hypothesis is presented and demonstrated in the form: it must have a basis in experience; it must propose a definite method of controlling experience; it must present a realizable aim for whoever would make the experiment. Now, Christianity, as all religion, rests in a basis of needs directed toward the organization and idealization of human society. It formulates its hypothesis in terms of the brotherhood of men—of the love of man for man as a practical principle—and the fatherhood of God as the ground and inspiration of this principle to its most efficient operation. Its test, its "direct and fundamental proof," centers, therefore, in the inquiry whether in the past it has organized society for what is best and highest; whether it is doing so at the present time; and

whether its ideal is so fitted to the demands of the most progressive societies, their needs, their aims, their idealizing forces, as to make it a certain, natural, and sane working hypothesis for the future. Christianity's record as a life, pre-eminently in that of its Founder, in a lesser but to a marked degree in that of his disciples, the identity of its principles and aims with the progressive agencies of society, the setting of standards which instead of being exhausted have not yet been adequately exploited, is the answer to this challenge. So tested, Christianity remains as a method of living whose claims cannot be gainsaid until it has been shown, by individual and by racial experience, that it is inadequate to produce that quality of life in inspiration, outlook, satisfaction, and power which it promises.

Life therefore, and the activities of life, are the test of the Christian religion. Theologies may come and go. Metaphysics may endeavor to explain and unify. The church may be true to its mission or not. But below all and through all, furnishing their renewing power or their condemning standard, is the vital hypothesis that life is good ; that men are brethren ; that they are the children of a heavenly Father ; that this is to be realized in an ethical life, regulated by the best social ideals and refined by its own peculiar quality. Wherever such a life is found, there we must recognize the Christian ; and the practical test by individual and social living is the one which must be resorted to in any doubt as to its truth and falsity. And, so tested, Christianity has nothing to fear. Finally, such a method leaves the intellect free to investigate in its own way the problems furnished by the different sciences and metaphysic. With reference to science, it maintains simply that religion has a right to view the universe from its own standpoint. With reference to metaphysic, the science of religion proffers its results as a contribution needed in the ultimate unification of the sciences to which all thought tends.

Such, I believe, is a fair statement, in outline, of Professor Knox's method and argument. It remains to indicate several criticisms. These must not be taken as interfering in any way with our sincere appreciation of the broad-mindedness, vigor, and skill of the author's apologetic. The volume will prove of inestimable value both within and without the church : within the church, because of the liberation which it will bring to many minds dissatisfied with orthodoxy, and yet unadjusted to newer views ; without the church it will be read widely because of its intelligence, its sanity, its discrimination. The criticisms referred to would recognize this, but would raise a doubt as to whether

it is possible to maintain Christianity as more than an ethics on the basis of a purely scientific point of view.

Granting that Christianity as ethics presents a method of living whose significance has been by no means exhausted; granting its wonderful flexibility in adjusting itself to, and its marvelous power in, varied circumstances; granting even that, in its view of human personality, it presents a standard which leaves nothing to be desired—have we a right, *on a purely scientific basis*, to rise to the conception of God as a personal being interested in humanity as a father is interested in his child? I think not. Yet without this conception religion is shorn away, and we are left with Christianity as ethics and nothing more.

1. My first objection may be put in this form: Monotheistic religions conceive of God as ultimate reality. Christianity adds the further conception that this ultimate reality is personal. On the other hand, science is partial. It does not pretend to exhaust the whole of reality, but merely to exhibit it from certain points of view. The order revealed by each science may be true and objective, but can never be taken as the whole reality. For example, the physical sciences lead us to energy, the biological to life, the mental to consciousness or spirit. Religion in its development may lead us to the conception of personal moral order as objective, but on the basis of science we must place this order on the same plane with energy and every other scientific medium. For science, the moral order of the universe, however objective it may be, has no more right to be lifted to an absolute plane than has energy. In brief, its objectivity is seen to consist in its embodiment in human life. Thus we may speak of a human world, as well as of a physical world, a living world, a conscious world—meaning the objective groupings of phenomena. So considered, however, the religious object is absolutely identical with the moral order of the universe of which conscience is the embodiment in the individual man, and the institutions and ideals of civilization its fruition in the race.

How these several worlds stand related to each other, and how we are to conceive the reality of which they are partial embodiments, is the problem of philosophy. Whether this reality is to be conceived as an Absolute of whose nature the moral order is an essential part, but still only a part, or whether it is to be thought of as a personal reality, is a problem which Christianity must face. There can be no doubt that Christianity makes the magnificent assumption that the ultimate reality is personal, but this assumption it must make good. Science

may provide the material for casting up the account, but in its partial character it cannot present the reckoning. Thus the dilemma faces us: either, be scientific throughout, investigating facts and their laws, realizing the farther we go the little and ever less that we know, becoming involved ever more thoroughly in the great mystery of things—in short, consistently agnostic; or, let us be frankly metaphysical, taking the risk of failure for the hope of a noble success. In the first case, we shall eliminate God the heavenly Father, and worship at the shrine of the unknown. In the second case, we shall learn the rules of metaphysical procedure and, under the tuition of all who have gone before, test whether the Absolute be not also God. One is free to choose which way he will go, but it is not consistent to avoid the hard road of metaphysic and at the same time to assume as true the results which metaphysic alone can demonstrate.

It is a corollary from this position that Professor Knox has no right to rise from the consciousness of Jesus to the character of God. No man's consciousness can be taken as an exponent of anything beyond itself without examination in terms of the criteria appropriate to the "object" indicated by the consciousness. Otherwise we should have no basis for discriminating illusion from reality. An insane person has intense, distinct, and definite experiences—perhaps even more so than the normal individual. We admit the fact of the experiences, but by no means take them for what they think themselves to be. And, in like manner, we may admit the fact of Jesus' consciousness of himself, of man, of God, and yet maintain that its interpretation may be other than himself or the church has supposed it to be. At least it must be urged that, unless we would labor under the illusion of the *petitio principii*, we must demonstrate why and how the object of Jesus' consciousness is to be taken at its face value. To repeat: Let it be granted that Jesus' experience of religion was individual, grand, inspiring; let it be granted, also, that this experience was the fruition of a long religious development—the question must still be raised whether its object, God, is to be taken as ultimate reality, or as the hypostatization in full personal form of the social organization which religion in its varied forms has constantly hypostatized. It is not an impossible thing that Christianity, as the fruition of religion, may be considered simply as the expression in full, free outline of the fact that social activities arise, proceed, and end within the limits of personality. So interpreted, Fatherhood would emerge as the recognition of the generic unity of all men; and brotherhood, as the recognition in a free

way of the intrinsic worth of the individual man in the construction, maintenance and enjoyment of the social fabric.

I do not maintain that such is the proper interpretation of Jesus' consciousness, but that, if we would go farther, we must not rest in the mere fact of his experience or in religious intuition. Every "fact" which involves an inference must justify that inference, and no intuition can escape the necessity of giving an account of itself.

2. My second doubt is equally serious, and leads to a similar conclusion. The universal object and working hypothesis of religion is God. How has this conception originated and operated? What form of objectivity does it possess? These are questions which we must raise, and for which the psychology of comparative religion should provide an answer. And my criticism of Professor Knox may be put thus: Comparative religion does not reveal a process in which a super-sensible ultimate reality is intuited and progressively apprehended, but rather one in which man progressively differentiates the fundamental organizing principles of his social life, and mistakenly, though naturally, sets these up as realities independent of and pre-existent to the social organization to which they were then supposed to be revealed.

I shall now state more definitely the conception to which the analysis of comparative religions leads me, and present, in outline, the arguments by which it is supported. The conception, stated simply, is this: Religion in its origin and in its aim embodies or seeks to embody, in a unified way, the controlling conceptions, needs, and activities of the human society in which it is found. God is the working hypothesis or controlling instrument *in* which the conceptions are organized, *by* which the needs are satisfied, and *in accordance with which* the activities are directed. My arguments are as follows:

a) The highly complex division of labor which embodies the differentiation of social activities leads us steadily backward to a time when custom was supreme. This custom, whether fixed or plastic, organized into a single instrument of social control the conceptions, needs, and activities of the community. Now, it is significant for our purpose that custom, originally and universally, was religious. This point is recognized by investigators in the admission that every science, every art, every institution of mankind goes back ultimately to religion. It is evident, therefore that, as it appears among primitive men, religion embodies their communal life in its full scope and in a unified way.

b) Religion occupies a similar position in contemporary life, indi-

vidual and social. No one doubts that when religion is vital, it is and should be fundamental. Religion dominates our lives because it is the whole life. It is not one part among other parts, but the whole, of which the several parts are organic members. And thus whatever unifies our consciousness, and becomes its controlling instrument, takes on religious quality. After the same manner, whenever the consciousness of a social group is unified, either continuously or spasmodically, the experience of the group appears as religious.

c) Religion and the character of God depend upon and vary with the conditions and circumstances of community life. Anthropology and comparative religion agree that the lower natural religions, such as animism, spiritism, fetishism, embody the conceptions of primitive communities with reference to their environments and their own lives therein, the emotions and desires, the fears, hopes, etc., which such conceptions arouse, and the methods of action employed in controlling the social situation thus developed. To animism everything is alive as man is alive. Natural objects, consequently, must be treated with the consideration which is accorded to friends or enemies. To "spiritism" the object scruffs off, as it were, the shadow or higher part which, for good or ill, can move about freely. Man's social consciousness changes accordingly, and an entirely new religious quality appears. To fetishism the shadow or double can attach itself to or enter into other objects. Accordingly, man thinks about it anew, feels anew, acts anew.

In the higher forms of nature-religion the same process is seen, only in a more marked degree. Note the natures of the gods. Community life has now become more settled, customs more complex and more highly organized, the sanctions of social life more elaborately developed. The god—what is it? Anything and everything conceived as having an important or controlling influence in the life of the community—the sun, moon, fire, the thunderbolt, the seasons, the sea, agencies of every kind, good or bad. These are reverenced or propitiated because of, and in accordance with, their influence upon the life and destiny of mankind.

What of the god's character? It is the reflex of man's, *i. e.*, of controlling social principles; and in all but vital ethical religions it is the reflex of conservative, as opposed to ideal, social principles. Hence, when ethical religions emerge, *i. e.*, when religious reconstruction has consciously begun, the complaint is made that the gods have a lower standard of action than that which is proper to men. Again, the gods

are to such an extent the reflex of social principles that we find in their characters and relationships every phase of social development. Note, for example, the emergence of a hierarchy of the gods, paralleling the social distinctions of king, noble, serf; the genealogy of the gods, paralleling the tracing of social relationships by way of the father or of the mother; the gradual transformation of the character of a god, paralleling the change which the object, action, or person represented by the god undergoes in the estimation of the society by which he is worshiped.

In ethical religions the applicability of our hypothesis is once more apparent. Confucianism represents a static social organization which has taken on a strictly religious character. Hinduism, Brahmanism, Buddhism are expressions of a social system in which the bond of unity is negative rather than positive, and in which the relation of the members of society to the whole is mechanical rather than organic. For good reason, Hinduism and Buddhism are religions not of this world, and Brahmanism the cult of a class rather than the religion of the many. On the other hand, the Jewish community, virile and stubborn, torn asunder, conquered, deported, but still maintaining an active family life and the tradition of a social organization, emerges with the conception of the importance of the individual as individual, of the naturalness and necessity of a social life organized on ideal principles. This conception, freed from the limits which the conservative view of national tradition laid upon it, appeared in Jesus as a religion which taught the inherent worth of man as an individual, the necessity of the reconstruction of society on ideal lines, and the character of God as resplendent with all the warmth and tenderness which the vicissitudes as well as the enjoyments of life had trained into the Jewish household.

Now, if this analysis be correct, what follows as the upshot of the science of comparative religion? This: God appears, not as a super-sensible ultimate reality whose nature is progressively apprehended by man, but as the hypostatization of the social principle which has organized and unified community life. And by hypostatization I mean that a principle which lives and moves and has its being as a regulative instrument within experience is set up as an entity existing apart from and prior to experience. Thus we see the gods of the nations, which are no more than the expression of organized and controlling social conceptions, needs, and activities, regarded as realities which exist before and reveal themselves to mankind. The explanation of this "dialectical illusion," as Kant designated it, is to be found in the

relations of the individual to social life. At first the social organization into which he was born engulfed him. The activities and methods of social living evidently antedated *him*. They came from an unknown past, by means not understood, and still on the very surface of them much more complex than anything that the activities of himself or his fellows could explain. They embodied, moreover, the most sacred sanctions of every phase of social life. Consequently it was but natural for man to set up these activities and methods as realities pre-existent to him, yet furnishing the standards of life and conduct. Later (as among the Greeks, and from thence downward to our modern life), when the individual found himself to be a creative factor in social life and organization, this conception gradually changed until, among the Greeks, the idea arose that every vocation, every institution, every ideal, is by institution and of man, and not by nature and of the gods. This conception, set aside to a great extent after the decay of Greek civilization, has re-emerged in modern times victorious from the grand intellectual tournament. Accordingly, while appreciating the naturalness of the "dialectical illusion," we must not in our own scientific work repeat the error, even though its avoidance involves the setting aside of what to many would appear to be a direct intuition of ultimate reality.

Thus the science of religion forces upon us the belief that the supposed revelation of God to man is really the revelation of man to himself, and that the value-judgments which we are wont to refer to deity must now be attached to man's social organization. In brief, religion, understood psychologically and socially, emerges from the science of comparative religion *as ethics*. This result agrees, significantly, with the part in apologetics which the ethical plays for such a comparative religionist as Professor Knox.

Watchman, what of the night? It would now appear as though religion had been eliminated, and ethics substituted as the self-conscious formulation of the principle unreflectively expressed in religion. And viewed from the standpoint of science merely, I can find no other answer to the question. It does not help in the least to maintain that ethical activity unveils an objective moral order; that this order must contain immeasurably more than ethics has as yet obtained; and consequently that, if the science of religion leads to ethics, ethics in its turn leads to religion. Such a doctrine forgets (*a*) that social nature is just as objective as physical nature, and that consequently the social ideal is itself the reality and not the progressive apprehension of

the reality; (b) that natural laws are regulative conceptions and not eternal entities; (c) even though it were granted that social forces were apprehensions of such entities, we should still have no right to set up a co-ordinate factor in reality as the determining whole. And this is done most certainly when we set up the moral order of society as the God of the universe.

What remains? This, I take it: for a purely scientific point of view the way to a satisfactory demonstration of religion is blocked. Religion and the Christian Religion, as viewed by science, reduce to ethics. So reduced, they vanish as religion. Is this all? By no means. There remains the possibility that, from a world-view, reality may not appear other than personal in the full sense of the term, as it is employed in the Christian conception of God. Should such a possibility turn out to be an actuality, religion and the Christian religion would re-emerge as a conscious possession which had justified its right to the field which it would possess. This, however, is the rough and thorny road of philosophy, and leads us through the dry fields of abstract metaphysics. Along this road and through these fields the "enlightened leaders of religious and Christian thought" must pass, if they would place their beliefs upon a satisfactory footing.

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### JOHN CALVIN

THE second volume of the great work on Calvin by Doumergue<sup>x</sup> meets the highest expectations of those who found such complete satisfaction in the first. It is taken up with a discussion of Calvin's first endeavors. While the first volume contained 634 pages, the second contains 815 pages. It is divided into five books, as follows: I, "Calvin in Italy;" II, "Calvin at Geneva—His First Sojourn;" III, "Calvin at Strasburg;" IV, "Calvin in Germany;" V, "The Return of Calvin to Geneva."

All through the work the classical school of history, as represented by Bonnet and Merle d'Aubigné, is set over against the documentary school, as represented by Albert Killiet, Fontana, Lecoultrre, and Cornelius.

We have seen that Calvin visited Italy. How long did he remain?

<sup>x</sup>*Jean Calvin: Les hommes et les choses de son temps.* Par E. DOUMERGUE. Tome II: "Les premiers essais." Lausanne: Bridel & C<sup>e</sup>, 1902. xii+815 pages. Fr. 30.